BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS

A LITTLE PARISIAN ACTRESS

"THE FORTUNES OF FIFI," by Molly Elliot Seawell, is one of the most entertaining books this author has written, if not indeed, the best of them all. It is the story of a little Parisian actress of the time of the first empire, and of Cartouche, one of the old moustaches of Napoleon, who was her guardian and devoted slave, and of the merry Bohemia in which they lived until Fifi was transplanted to bourgeois respectability and dullness. There is not a line in the book that is not delightful.

One of the refreshing things about Miss Seawell's work is that it is seldom intended to be taken seriously. The tale trips as lightly as a dance measure thrummed on a guitar, or the twinkling feet of Fifi herself. The sentiment is graceful without being artificial, and, above all, the author makes us see things. Without an effort we land in Paris and follow the ups and downs of the dainty heroine until at the end she bids her audience adieu with a ripple of mischievous laughter. Nobody can be bored in reading this book, no, not for an instant.

One of the particularly funny situations is that of Fifi striving wildly to dissipate her fortune in order to get rid of her bourgeois fiance. This is a part of it:

"The first gown they showed her nearly made her scream with delight. It was almost enough to make Louis Bourget break their engagement at sight. It was a costume of staring yellow brocade, with large purple flowers on it, and was obviously intended for a woman nine feet high and three feet broad—and Fifi was but a slender twig of a girl. One huge flower covered her back, and another her chest, while three or four went around the vast skirt which trailed a yard behind. The manager put it on Fifi, while her assistants and fellow-conspirators joined with her in declaring that the gown was ravishing on Fifi, which it was, in a way."

Some discussion has arisen over Fifi's interviews with the Pope, which, to devout Catholics, have the appearance of being on the edge of irreverence. But given Fifi and the circumstances, the interviews would probably have occurred very much as they are described. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.)

THE OPTIMISM OF DR. HALE

SINGULARLY vigorous and modern in his ideas is Dr. Edward Everett Hale, and as these ideas would be considered advanced if given out by a young man, they are all the more remarkable when it is remembered that Dr. Hale has been a well-known public man for more than half a century. His new book of essays on questions of the day is published under the title, "We, the People," and is exceedingly breezy and readable.

The unquenchable optimism of the author is perhaps his most prominent characteristic. He is always "looking forward and not back;" to him every mistake of the past is but a stepping-stone to knowledge. It sometimes seems as if the college men of today are scarcely as young at heart as this veteran of eighty, who is still unhesitatingly and outspokenly the prophet of American democracy.

There would be as much reason for Dr. Hale's being pessimistic, if he wanted to be, as for the croaking of any other man. He has within half a lifetime seen his native State change from a homogeneous land, peopled by native Americans of Revolutionary stock, to a collection of factory towns and large cities, with an intermixture of rural hamlets, all peopled by a polyglot horde of importations from Europe, with a leaven of perhaps 15 per cent of old stock. Yet this is what he says of our democracy:

"The truth remains that the people of America govern America. It is quite worth while before we put too much trust either in critics on the other side of the ocean or any heartsick critic at home that we open our eyes and ears and find out what the American people is.

"In the first place, the American people is made up in a very large proportion of men and women who can read and write, who know enough for the formation of an intelligent opinion, and who mean on the whole to do what is right. All Shakespeare's sneers at the groundlings, the rabble, and the mob were true enough when he described people of Rome in Julius Caesar's time. They are not true of the American people now. Four per cent of the people of the State of New York are people who can bring only their muscle and their weight to their daily work. These are the people who dig the drains; who carry buckets of coal up five stories or ten. The other 96 per cent of the workmen of New York are persons who work with their brains, such men as an expressman, who keeps a delicate account of 350 customers in the course of a day, and in the course of the year does not make ten mistakes. That man is as fit to read his newspaper and to make a judgment between Judas Iscariot, if he is a candidate, and Joseph, of Arimathaea, if he is a candidate, as is any intelligent reader of these lines."

Some of the essays on subjects in the domain of political economy are rather daring. Dr. Hale believes thoroughly in public ownership of mines, in old-age pensions, and in some other things which most conservative writers dodge with the scared cry of "socialism!" His abiding faith in the American people is doubtless a reason for this attitude. At any rate, the sane, confident hopefulness of the book makes it pleasant to read. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.)

A BOWERY BOY

"My Mamie Rose," by Owen Kildare, is a rather remarkable book. It is the autobiography of the author, who is said to have been a bartender in Steve Brodie's saloon, and a "bouncer" in an infamous New York dive, and at the age of thirty to have met a little school teacher who taught him to read and write and made a man of him. At this time, eight years later, he is earning his living by writing, and has a literary style which can stand comparison with that of the average college graduate. It is not an impossible story, but it may justly be called remarkable.

Mr. Kildare met the girl whom he calls "My Mamie Rose" when she was passing a corner saloon, where she was insulted by the gang of drunken loafers of which he was a member. Her courage and womanliness aroused his dormant chivalry, and he protected her. That was the beginning of the acquaintance, the story of which he tells with a reverence, simplicity, and frankness which would perhaps be possible only to a Celt. Born of mixed Irish and French ancestry, reared—or rather allowed to grow up—in the Bowery of the sixties and seventies, Owen Kildare was just that combination of experiences and possibilities, apparently, which made practicable what he calls the miracle of his reform. Certain it is that with an average girl and an average loafer such an experiment as the one recorded here would have been a blank failure. With Owen Kildare and "Mamie Rose" it was a shining success.

For all the talk of Bowery literature, the public in general knows about as much of New York life among the working classes as it does of the domestic habits of Kamtschatka. Mr. Kildare has nothing very good to say of fiction writers of the Richard Harding Davis and "Chimmie Fadden" type. He does not, however, give any specimens of the real thing in East Side dialect. He tells us what the people in the Fourth ward do not say, but nothing of what they do say. He is refreshingly frank in his opinions of those "society" people who come down into what they call the slums to study the poor as if they were wild beasts, and his account of an evening in a rich man's drawing room is particularly rich. The whole book is worth reading. (New York: The Baker & Taylor Co.)

The Leopard's New Skin

"The Leopard's Spots," by Thomas Dixon, jr., has been brought out in a holiday edition, of which it may be said that it is perfectly suited in binding and decoration to the text. Possibly it might have pleased Mr. Dixon better if a limited number of copies could have been bound in human skin, but that would have been almost too daring an innovation, even for an author who is so distinctly out for blood.

The illustrations, by C. D. Williams, are entirely sympathetic. They make most of the masculine characters look as much like ruffians as their behavior indicates them to be. It would have been untrue to the spirit of Mr. Dixon's book to make any one of his creations look like a gentleman, and Mr. Williams has admirably succeeded in avoiding this mistake. The men of the book, if a group picture were taken of them, might be supposed to belong to Quantrell's band of raiders. Characteristically, Mr. Dixon has inserted as frontispiece a picture of his home, and a photogravure of himself stares up at you as you open the box which contains the book. He will never lose anything through shrinking modesty. (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.)

Dinkelspiel, Junior.

"Li'l Rhymes for Li'l Fellers" is the title of a big square book of jingles by George Vere Hobart, of "Dinkelspiel" fame, and some of the verses are in dialect, Dutch and negro and Young America dialect, all of which Mr. Hobart manages very well.

The best things in the collection are those in the form of songs, for Mr. Hobart has an unusual endowment of the lyric gift, and his little lullabies almost sing themselves. "Das Kleine Kind" is quaint and pretty; so is "A Darktown Lullaby," so are half a dozen others of the same ilk.

Of the verses which are not lyrics most are in the style of Riley's "Rhymes of Childhood," "Sister Mary Ann Has Got the Measles" reads like a lyric out of some child's comic opera:

"Yes, I know you've got a doil,
But that ain't no good at all
'Cause my sister Mary Ann has got the measles!"

The impish self-satisfaction of that and the naturalness of it! (New York: R. H. Russell.)

In the Red West.

"Judith of the Plains," by Marie Manning, author of "Lord Allingham, Bankrupt," is one of those unexpected books. Nothing in it happens according to the stereotyped novel fashion, and to readers who like unconventionality it will prove distinctly refreshing.

Judith is a Wyoming girl, or rather woman, of quarter-breed Indian blood, but without the wildness which one naturally associates with such a mixture—in novels. Of course, those who have come in contact with the civilized Indian in real life know that he is not always a savage, but few novelists are realistic enough to resist the temptation of dwelling upon hereditary possibilities. Judith, however, is womanly, brave, and tender.

Of the minor characters, Mrs. Yellett is perhaps the best, with her aspirations and her Book of Hiram, and her unique gypsy establishment. The plot, what there is of it, turns upon the well-known antagonism between sheep herders and cattlemen in a cattle country, and the story is full of episodes. (New York: Harper & Bros.)

A Queen Anne Romance.

"The Baronet in Corduroy," by Albert Lee, is a novel of the time of Queen Anne, dealing with the gambling fever which possessed London in that day. It has, like most of Mr. Lee's work, a certain gruesomeness about it, but it is not nearly so much like a nightmare as his ghastly Netherland romance, "The Key of the Holy House." The pictures of London life, high and low, the debtor's prison, and the condition of the masses, are very good, and the story is full of incident. (New York: D. Appleton & Co.)

The Little Colonel Again

"The Little Colonel at Boarding School," by Annie Fellows Johnston, is the latest volume in the delightful "Little Colonel" series of books for girls. In these days of rubbish it is refreshing to come across a book so charming, fresh and original as this. It is full of the scent of roses and the gentle thoughts of girlhood; it breathes the spirit of the Old South; the Little Colonel is of the true race of Southern gentlewomen, than whom there are no finer.

Not one author in a thousand has the wit or the tact to write a really good book for girls of thirteen or fourteen. Most of them are wishy-washy or sentimental. Mrs. Johnston is neither. Her little heroine, Lloyd Sherman, has all the spirit of a gallant race and all the sweetness of a long line of lovely women. She is a real child, not a made-over woman, and her simple adventures are as unstudied, funny and characteristic as if they had happened to one's next-door neighbor.

Dear Little Colonel! May your fame be long in the land, and may every little American girl know and love your sweet ways. (Boston: L. C. Page & Co.)

A Bright Juvenile Book.

"New Fortunes; or, How Molly and Her Brothers Came to Boulder Gulch," by Mabel Earle, is a new juvenile book by a new and interesting writer. It is intended for readers of from twelve to fifteen years, perhaps the hardest public for any writer to suit, and it is bright, wholesome, and interesting from beginning to end. The heroine is a girl of seventeen, who goes to keep house for her brother in a Western mining camp, and the perplexities, adventures, and friendships of their life there are described with much humor and vivacity. One particularly refreshing thing about the story is that no "love interest" is dragged in. (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.)

The Latest Golliwoggs.

"The Golliwoggs' Circus," by Florence and Bertha Upton, is the latest of a popular series, and the grotesque figures of the Golliwoggs are as funny, as outlandish, and as fascinating as ever. The color work is very good. (New York: Longmans, Green & Co.)

For Elocutionists.

"Selected Reading From the Most Popular Novels" is a little book compiled by William Mather Lewis, head of the department of oratory and debate in Lake Forest College. If one wants a book of reading for public use, this is a good one. (New York: Hinds & Noble.)

The Progress of the Arts.

"The Art Album of the International Studio" is a collection of representative plates from "The International Studio," carefully selected and arranged, forming a most attractive gift book. It is intended as a sort of resume of the progress of the arts for the past seven years, and fulfills its purpose admirably. (New York: John Lane, The Bodley Head.)

A Bookworm's Romance.

"The Bondage of Ballinger," by Roswell Field, has come out in a new edition. It is a charming, quaint romance of a book collector and his fatal passion, and those who know the work of Mr. Field can imagine its style. (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company.)

A Book for Boys.

"The Young Ice Whalers," by Winthrop Packard, is an unusually good adventure story for boys. It deals with the fortunes of two youths who go on a whaling voyage to the Arctic regions, become separated from their ship's company, and remain exiled among the Eskimos for two years or more. All sorts of exciting, but not improbable episodes make part of the story, and much information about the Arctic regions will be gained by each boy who reads the book. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)

ARCHITECTURE OF ALL AGES

"HOW TO JUDGE ARCHITECTURE," by Russell Sturgis, is a companion volume to H. R. Poore's work on "Pictorial Composition." It is intended to explain the difference between various styles and the reasons therefor, so that ordinary people can understand. Moreover, the reasons for these differences are given, and the reader will be able to follow in a general way the progress of architecture from Greek and Roman times to the present day.

For example, Mr. Sturgis says of the cathedrals of the Middle Ages:

"The construction of the medieval churches is as complex as that of the greatest Roman monuments; this coming from a necessity of providing interiors relatively larger than those of the Roman imperial epoch. The builders were of the twelfth century, and even in the most nearly well-governed countries of Europe had but limited resources. No king, no great noble controlling a province, no bishop, no convent however rich, could dispose of resources for one instant comparable to those of a Roman pro-consul in even a small town of the empire. The medieval men had to get as much building as they could for their money.

"If they built their walls thick, as they seem to the modern traveler, this was because they were unable to get good masons. A stone wall may be carried up forty feet high with a thickness of only three feet, even when pierced with windows, if you have good workmen in your employ and good flat-bedded stone with tolerable mortar, but as your material is the worse and as your masons are the more unskilled, you have to build the thicker. Indeed, the history of Romanesque architecture is that of a long-continued fight between the problem and the would-be solvers thereof. * * * The history of any one great church is a record of continual failure of walls, foundations or abutments; some part of the vaulting is forever crumbling and threatening to fall, so that it has to be rebuilt, and now and then there's a crash and a catastrophe. The buttresses have to be enlarged, iron ties have to be inserted, even the plan of the vaulting has to be changed every now and then and a new experiment tried with a view to its greater permanence in another style of work. Hence it is that the modern student of such buildings has at once that delight in them which comes from their very archaism mingled with a kind of deprecatory pity; we sympathize with their builders' aims and regret their feeble resources and their small knowledge; we love their buildings as we love the stammering speech of childhood."

The first chapters treat of Greek and Roman design; and in the chapter on Athens we find information as to the curious curves which appear to be straight lines, and on which the exquisite beauty of the Parthenon partly depends; also the statement that so far from the Greek temples having been pure white, as we are wont to imagine them, they were undoubtedly painted and gilded with the utmost elaboration and skill. Succeeding chapters are devoted to "Medieval Design," "Revived Classic Design," "Eighteenth Century Design," and the initiative and original architectural work of the last hundred years. Mr. Sturgis thinks that Parisian design since 1860 is conspicuous for its good taste in adopting the ideal to the needs of modern life; and he also commends those forms of American architecture which have been borrowed from the Spanish and Mexican sixteenth century buildings. There are sixty-four illustrations of different styles in architecture. (New York: The Baker & Taylor Company.)

A DENVER HEROINE

In "The Interference of Patricia" Lillian Bell has told a love story at which she hinted in "The Dowager Countess and the American Girl," and a very good story it is. It is short—hardly more than a novelette—and the society of Denver is likely to protest vigorously against the picture which the author has drawn of that town, and the very frank statement she has made concerning the life of its people. It may be true that Colorado air is so stimulating that the men have to get drunk and the women to flirt in order to work off excitement, but they probably will not enjoy being told so.

However, "The Interference of Patricia" is, taken for all it is worth, quite the best book Mrs. Bogue has yet written. This is probably due to the fact that in Patricia she had a heroine with whom she could let herself go. She has always been rather inclined to create heroines who gave one the impression of going around with a riding whip in one hand and a revolver in the other, and when displeased by anything being liable either to use these weapons or to sweep out of the room like a tornado in petticoats and slam the door. But in the case of heroines supposed to move in the best society this inclination really had to be curbed, because society wouldn't stand it.

Patricia is the daughter of a business buccaneer who owns half Denver. She falls tempestuously in love with an Englishman and in the fervor of her devotion would be quite willing to scalp her father or anybody else if necessary. She announces her intention of entering the inner circle of Denver after this manner.

"I want to break into society. I want to know these swells who are forever coming to Denver to get rich. God help 'em! * * * I want to do it in a big way. I want to knock people silly. I want to flabbergast the whole bunch."

And that is precisely what she does. But for all that "Patrichy," as her father calls her, is a lovable sort of girl. The average man might feel, if honored by her affection, a little as Balzac's French soldier did when the panther fell in love with him, but the story of that idyl is interesting, you will remember. At any rate, a brass band heroine is something new in life. (New York: Harper & Bros.)

"THE JUMPING FROG"

A new dress has been provided for Mark Twain's inimitable story of "The Jumping Frog." The new edition contains, according to the title page, "The Jumping Frog in English, then in French, Then Clawed Back Into a Civilized Language Once More by Patient, Unremunerated Toil." The illustrations, which are numerous, are by F. Strothman.

It will be remembered by everybody who saw the article, that Mark Twain, some fifteen years ago, published a plaintive remonstrance against a certain French translator who did "The Jumping Frog" into French, and then blandly observed that he saw nothing funny in it. After this protest, the aggrieved author, to prove his case, republished the French version and his own retranslation, which can only be described as excruciatingly funny. This is one sentence:

"Eh bien! I no saw not that that frog had nothing of better than each frog."

Mr. Clemens asks what he has done to be abused and misrepresented like this before the French people. (New York: Harper & Bros.)

"The Colonel's Opera Cloak."

"The Colonel's Opera Cloak," by Christine C. Brush, which came out nearly thirty years ago in the "No Name" series, has been republished with exceedingly attractive illustrations. This whimsical little story of a Southern family in the North is likely to retain its popularity for a long time yet. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.)

A Crazy Man.

"The World Destroyer," by an author whose pen name is "Horace Mann," is a story of the hallucinations of an insane man. It is well told, and the interest does not flag. (Washington: The Lucas-Lincoln Company.)

PARLOR COMEDIES

"A Bunch of Roses, and Other Parlor Plays," by M. E. M. Davis, is a little collection of comedies which will be acceptable to amateur actors. It is happily dedicated—

"To the Players Who Put Life Into These Plays in the Old House in Royal Street."

The author shows distinct dramatic ability, and some of these little plays ought to be overwhelmingly funny, if cleverly acted. The one which gives its title to the book is good, so are "Queen Anne Cottages," "His Lordship," and "A Dress Rehearsal." "Christmas Boxes" gives a chance for some good Irish character work, and so does "His Lordship" afford opportunity for clever young people who have a good French or English accent. "The New System" is a little too much of an extravaganza, and depends too much on costume to be as acceptable for ordinary use as some of the others. None requires much in the way of stage properties beyond what may be found in the average house. (Boston: Small, Maynard & Co.)

An Extraordinary School.

"The Manor School," by L. T. Meade, is a story of English schoolgirl life, the heroine being a high-strung little damsel of thirteen, Christian Mitford. Christian, on finding that she is to be summarily dumped into a "strict discipline" boarding school, to stay for six years while her parents are absent in Persia, runs away, and is not found for twenty-four hours. This escape, natural enough in the circumstances, is the occasion of much tribulation, for the child's schoolmates persecute and ostracize her into a brain fever. Nothing, apparently, is done to the inconsiderate parents, who, as they are here pictured, are quite detestable. Extraordinary country, England, according to the story books. (New York: The Mershon Company.)

A BUNCH OF CALENDARS

The calendars of 1904 are to be no less dainty and original in design than their predecessors. "Old-Time Memories" presents twelve groups of quaint little Kate Greenaway figures engaged in sports appropriate to the seasons. "The Star of Hope Calendar" is made up of holly wreathes, inclosing star-shaped pictures. Quotations from Whittier, Van Dyke, and others accompany beautiful flower designs on another calendar. The little "Dainty Messengers" calendar presents several pictures of pretty maidens framed in miniature style. "The Secret of Happiness Calendar" is the name given to one with a quotation about happiness for each month. "A Paris Calendar" is a most artistic creation in pale colors. "The Snowball" is made up of snowballs and holly wreathes and children's faces, and "The Venetian Calendar" presents half a dozen charmingly colored scenes from Venice. An ingenious little Christmas device which comes from the same publishing house is a diminutive paper case decorated with holly and containing a receptacle for a coin. (London: Ernest Nister. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.)

Mark Twain's Audiences.

This Mark Twain anecdote comes from "Harper's Weekly:"

It was on the train somewhere between New York and the West. Mark Twain was traveling between towns on a lecture tour, and a friend had been drawing the humorist out on the subject of his experiences.

"What sort of audience," he asked, "do you like best? Who, in your opinion, make the most responsive and sympathetic listeners?"

"College men," replied Mark, after a moment's thought—"college men and convicts."

Fiction Invertebrate

"Shipmates in Sunshine" is a story by F. Frankfort Moore, who can be entertaining when he cares to be, but who evidently, in this case, has not cared. It concerns the relations between a lot of people whose personalities are with difficulty kept separate in the reader's mind, and who are fellow-passengers on a steamer bound for the West Indies. There is no plot in the book, no incident to speak of, and no character. Mr. Moore seems to have occupied himself chiefly in noting the different varieties of negro to be found on the various islands of the West Indian group. He really seems to be quite a connoisseur on the peculiarities of the black population of those islands; but as there are no negro characters in the story, and the affairs of the white people have nothing to do, even remotely, with this black population, it seems unnecessary for the author to lug it into quite so prominent a place. The average reader really loses interest in a story when required to stop once in half a dozen pages and hear about the squalor, immorality, and general unpleasantness of the local population. (New York: D. Appleton & Co.)

Folk of the Sea.

"The Strife of the Sea," by T. Jenkins Hains, is a sort of ocean jungle book, dealing with the ways of the whale, the shark, the penguin, the albatross, the ray, and other salt water folk. It is a great story book.

Mr. Hains has, be it said, at the outset, avoided making these creatures human, and therein lies the grim fascination of the tales. Half of them are horror stories, as much of the literature of the sea must be, but the author treats his subject with a certain reserve. He is content to make one's hair rise of its own volition; he does not go so far as to take the scalp.

The worst of these, from the point of view of a nervous person, is "The Outcast," a story of a fight between a man and a devil fish, which would do credit to Victor Hugo. "A Tragedy of the South Atlantic" is one of those marvelous tales which are ever found in the wake of the whaling industry. It is one of the best, if not the best, of the eleven in the book, and the old whale who leads the attack on the whaling ship is a hero worth discussing.

"The White Follower," which deals with a pet albatross, is really charming, vivid in description, and intense in interest.

"The Sea Dog" is another strong bit of work, and so are "The Cape Horners" and "The Old Man of Sand Key," a pathetic pelican story, with nothing sentimental in its pathos. "The Nibblers" is probably the only story ever written about ship rats, and "The Loggerhead" is probably the only one about a turtle.

The strength of these stories is their originality. There is nothing literary about them; they might have been told in a sail loft or over the mending of nets. Yet the descriptions are marked by the somber power of the writer, who knows how to handle a stern subject without being afraid of it. While imaginative, as all animal tales must be, they are in no sense artificial. The salt of the sea is in them, the lash of the waves inspired them; to read them is like voyaging to Rio on a sailing ship. The year has been unusually rich in books of the sea, by various authors, some of whom are men of genius, but few are as good as this. (New York: The Baker & Taylor Co.)

Feminine Philosophy.

"The Damsel and the Sage: A Woman's Whimsies," by Elinor Glyn, is something like "The Reflections of Ambrosine," with the story left out. It contains the author's philosophy in chunks.

The style, of course, is charming—nothing of Elinor Glyn's is ever less than that—but the slightly cynical reflections on love and life which add spice to a novel are apt to be a little monotonous when taken unalloyed. It is so in this case. The book should have had pictures. (New York: Harper & Bros.)

The Country Boy.

"THE COUNTRY BOY," by Forrest Crissey, is a series of sketches of the life of an average American boy frank, truthful and amusing—the sketches, not the boy. He is amusing to the reader, but probably was not so regarded by his parents; he was as truthful as other boys; but so far from being frank, he was as shy as a little woodchuck. His nearest and dearest never suspected some of the emotions that filled his soul—hatred of Howard Richard Taylor, for instance, thus vividly described:

"A new emotion stirred his blood as he plodded past the solemn peaked church—a fierce, vindictive passion of resentment. He knew it was a wicked feeling, but he didn't care! He was glad of it! What if he did hate the red-headed city cousin, who brushed his hair so smooth, put on clean clothes every morning, and could play the piano? Harlow leaned over the low, whittled railing that spanned the mill race bridge and thought how he would like to throw the lordly Howard Richard Taylor down where the 'pumpkin seeds' and 'shiners' were flashing their gleaming sides in the deep water."

Reprehensible as this feeling was, many ex-country boys will remember something like it and chuckle with reminiscent glee when the too-insolent Howard is finally chastised by Harlow. The war between the cockney and the "yap" is of long standing, but on his own ground the yap does not always get the worst of it.

Mr. Crissey knows the American boy thoroughly; there is no doubt about that. He has written a delightful book on a subject universally and eternally interesting. (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company.)

Another Country Boy.

That delightful boy book, "Johnnie," by E. C. Laughlin, has come out in a new edition, the first having appeared about five years ago. The illustrations, by Will Vawter, are entirely in keeping with the text. They are all boy, live boy, and if one may make a guess, Indiana boy. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.)

The Ancient and Honorable.

"The Historie Book: A Tale of Two Worlds and Five Centuries," edited by Justin H. Smith, will be interesting to many people as a souvenir of the visit of the Honourable Artillery Company to this country. It contains a complete history of the Honourable Artillery Company of London, with portraits of its officers, and a similar history of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston, with portraits. Marginal illustrations show the progress which has been made in the equipments of the London company from 1537 to the present day, and the uniforms worn by each company at various periods of its history. The portraits include not only the present officers, but many of the former ones, and to anyone who is connected with either company the book cannot fail to be fascinating. (Norwood, Mass.: The Norwood Press.)

A Breton Romance.

"Barbe of Grand Bayou," by John Oxenham, is a vivid and powerful romance of Breton life, Barbe being the daughter of the lighthouse keeper of Grand Bayou, a magnificent young woman, with the strength of a man, but nothing else masculine about her. Alain, her lover, is a typical Breton sailor, strong, simple, and brave. The efforts of a rival to get rid of Alain, and the hatred of Barbe's father for the young man, lead to a series of complications involving an adventure unique in its horror and peril. The author has managed his plot skillfully, and the crisis of the story comes quite unexpected by the reader. The local color is good. This story is not one of those which might have happened anywhere; every one of its episodes really belongs to the life of Brittany; and that is something to say of any novel in these days of facile and not too skillful faking. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.)

JOSEPHINE'S GIRLHOOD

"MAM'ZELLE FIFINE," by Eleanor Atkinson, is a charming story of the girlhood of the Empress Josephine. It does not touch on her later career at all, but deals simply with her life on Martinique. It is nearly as picturesque as Lafcadio Hearn's stories of "L'Isle des Revenants," and gives a vivid and delightful picture of the island.

The interest of the story is so purely romantic that one feels disposed to criticise the introduction of a sea-fight. The desire of the reader is to hear of Fifine, not of the history of the time. This is really the only fault which can be found with the book.

The description of the Mardi Gras carnival as held by the negro population of St. Pierre is beautiful. It is the more impressive from the hidden, sinister political meaning introduced by the author. A part of its runs as follows:

"Mountain heights of blazing green circled behind the revelers; sky and sea of burning blue arched above and below; streets of dazzling yellow, crested with flame-red roofs, fell from their dancing feet. As if the exuberant spirit of the tropics were incarnated in forms of grace, mad with joy, the maskers undulated—a rainbow-tinted flood—down all the failing streets.

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"For the length of a mile there was a flowing river of sound and color. Swaying, advancing, embracing, retreating, whirling, the rhythmic stream hurried by. There was a booming of tambours, a blare of trumpets, a shrill piping of reeds, a tinkle of calabash banjos, a wailing of violins. Above all the music of instruments rose the penetrating sweetness of the human voice. The revelers surged into the market square for the multitudinous cotillon—the calinda.

"A band of imps, with bat-heads and flapping web wings, came shrieking down from the ramparts, bearing a dummy on a pole. It was a caricature of the power of France, for the stuffed figure, in a cast-off white and gold uniform of the army, had a gilded fleur-de-lis for a head. Singing 'Yankee Doodle' at the top of their discordant voices, the imps rushed down the Rue Dauphine and cast the hated image into the sea." (New York: D. Appleton & Co.)

"THE CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE"

"The Circle in the Square," by Baldwin Sears, is a Southern novel, which has justly attracted much attention from the honesty and earnestness of the author, and the strength of the character-drawing. Mr. Sears has evidently tried in all sincerity to tell the truth about certain phases of Southern life, and it looks as if he had in a measure succeeded. In addition to this he has created an admirable hero. Shan Morgan is a magnificent specimen of young man. Intentionally or otherwise the author has made him the only decent young man in the book.

The scene is laid in a small and sleepy Southern town, in which political agitation turning on race antagonism has paralyzed all industry and corrupted every public official. It is a fearful arraignment of political monopolies. More temperate, and far more decent than "The Leopard's Spots," it is a much stronger book for that reason, though the antagonism of the author to the people he call "nigras" is nearly as strong as that of Mr. Dixon. He suggests no remedy for the deplorable condition of things which he pictures save the old, old remedy of honest and independent public spirit, and therein he is wise. Nobody can make a community decent if it does not want to be decent, and no outside assistance from heaven or elsewhere can save people from disease if they persist in drinking bad water. Shan Morgan, as has been said, supplies the respectable element of the story. He is no impossible hero, only a typical young Southerner of the better sort. The other young men are contemptible roues.

Some criticism has been called forth by the over-elaboration of the dialect in this story, and a discussion has been going on for a fortnight in the columns of a New York paper over the question whether white people anywhere in the South ever say "you all" when addressing a single person, or use such phrases as "he all" and "that all." It is asserted by people who say they have lived for years in Kentucky and Alabama that these phrases are heard there, and others assert as positively that they are not. Certainly it is not usual for the educated Southerner to use them, but, on the other hand, the characters in this story are represented to be lifelong dwellers in a little mountain town, far from colleges or any other corrective influence. (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.)

WRITERS OF THE DAY

"Among the Men Who Have Written Famous Books—Second Series," is a new volume of biographical sketches of authors of the day, by Edward F. Harkins. It contains portraits and brief complimentary sketches of George Ade, Irving Bacheller, Cyrus Townsend Brady, Jack London, Hopkinson Smith, Arthur Sherburne Hardy, and many others. The pictures are excellent, the extracts from the works of these authors judiciously selected, and, as the work is in no sense critical, its laudatory nature is not a serious defect. It will be of material assistance to those who wish to know something of current literature, but are prevented by lack of time or taste from keeping up with all the new books.

Most of the information found here is not at all incredible. It is refreshing, for example, to learn that Cyrus Townsend Brady dictates all his novels, being of too impatient a temperament even to use a typewriter; the discerning suspected long ago that something of that kind was the matter. One is not surprised to discover that George Ade is a most modest and unassuming man, with no pose about him; that, too, one somehow takes for granted. Nor is one disposed to find it improbable that Charles Major thinks novelists create situations in order that they may lead up to certain things they wish to say. Mr. Major's novels sound as if they were constructed on that plan.

But there are one or two curious things in the book for all that. We find here, for example, the sentence:

"I can pardon Sir Malcolm for forgetting Mistress Madge, while he rides to Haddon Hall with the seductive Mary Tudor."

Mr. Major has taken some daring liberties with history, but did he mix Stuart and Tudor to that extent? We think not.

And who, please, is "Dodridge," mentioned as the author of "Alice in Wonderland?" Was not Charles Lutwidge Dodgson the author of that classic? And why should the perpetrator of these "bucks" have anything to say about "lazy and superficial critics?" The Dodridge blunder appeared in the Hardy article when it came out in a periodical, but, apparently, nobody cared to correct it before its appearance in this book. (Boston: L. C. Page & Co.)